

The Oklahoma Miner

Published Every Thursday

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E. A. MARCOM

Editor
Business Manager

Entered as second-class matter at the postoffice at Krebs, Oklahoma, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Subscription Price:
One Year \$1.00
Six Months 50c

THURSDAY JUNE 12, 1913.

Of Interest to Indians.

That there will be a sweeping investigation of the administration of Indian Affairs in the United States, and that this proposed congressional inquiry will lead to radical reforms in present methods of handling the business of the red wards of the nation, is the belief of members of Congress.

In recent years vast sums have been spent by the government in handling the business of the Indians and a great percent of this money has been taken from tribal treasuries. The Oklahoma Indians have been forced to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on the upkeep of an administrative force, the wisdom of which is still under question.

Years after years, notwithstanding the work of the Indian bureau in Washington, the business has multiplied although the Indian population has not increased in proportion. In addition to this, in recent years, the charges of fraud against the Indians of the country have multiplied, notwithstanding the increased government force of guardians. The Indians themselves are crying for reform, and more freedom in the handling of their own affairs, and it is expected the proposed congressional investigation will do much toward about a satisfactory solution of the Indian problem. Oklahoma probably would welcome relief from the present top heavy bureaucratic system more than any other state.

The total number of Indians in the United States is 265,683 and two of the five largest tribes in the country are located in Oklahoma according to a bulletin issued by the census bureau. The bulletin shows that Oklahoma has a greater number of Indians than any other state in the Union, one-fourth of the entire Indian population residing within its borders.

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The Cherokee nation is the largest with 31,499 members and the Choctaw the fourth largest with 15,917 citizens. Owing to the increase in mixed marriages government experts declare that full bloods are destined to form a decreasing proportion of the Indian population and ultimately disappear altogether.

McMurray Blocked.

Washington, D. C., June 9th.—The greatest step in the fight to kill the contracts between J. F. McMurray of McAlester, Oklahoma, whom Senator Ashurst termed one of the smoothest lobbyists he ever has seen and members of the five tribes in Oklahoma was taken Monday afternoon by the senate Indian appropriation bill which is designed to prevent McMurray's collection of \$3,500,000 from the Indians.

The senate Indian affairs committee was in session from morning until late in the afternoon and during almost the entire contracts were under consideration.

Owing to the fact it was feared the Gore amendment against the McMurray contracts was so sweeping in its words that it might prevent all Indians making contracts of whatsoever character a substitute was adopted by the committee, which reads:

"No contract with an Indian where such contract relates to the tribal funds or property in the hands of the United States shall be valid nor shall any payment rendered in relation thereto be made unless the consent of the United States has been previously given."

The contract matter will, after being acted upon by the senate, go to a conference committee and it is expected the clause as adopted Monday, will remain in the measure throughout and until the Indian bill becomes a law.

Tom Caswell returned home Saturday night from Henryetta where he was engaged in mine work for the past few months. Tom will probably accept a position at Col. E. A. Jones' mine.

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